

VZCZCXYZ0000  
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHFR #7666/01 3390847  
ZNY SSSSS ZZH  
O 050847Z DEC 06  
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS  
TO RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3561  
INFO RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL IMMEDIATE 0411  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE IMMEDIATE  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
RUEHNO/USDELMC BRUSSELS BE IMMEDIATE  
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO IMMEDIATE 3694

S E C R E T PARIS 007666

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

USDP FOR DAS DAN FATA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/04/2016  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [ECPS](#) [NATO](#) [AF](#) [FR](#)  
SUBJECT: U/S OF DEFENSE FOR POLICY EDELMAN'S CONSULTATIONS  
IN PARIS: MAKING PROGRESS ON AFGHANISTAN

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Karl Hofmann, Reason 1.4 B/D

11. (C) Summary: Senior French officials agreed with U/S of Defense for Policy Eric Edelman that significant progress had been made at the NATO Riga Summit. The GOF highlighted its recent decision to do more in Afghanistan by ensuring that its Tajikistan-based planes continue to support ISAF and OEF through 2007, increasing the number of French trainers of the Afghan army, and authorizing the temporary deployment of French forces outside the Kabul zone to assist fellow allies, although only on "a case by case basis." France explained that its proposal for a Contact Group for Afghanistan is essentially an effort to ensure more effective delivery of international assistance and reconstruction efforts, and welcomed U.S. suggestions. The question of whether to include Iran in the contact group remained open to discussion.

12. (S) French officials were receptive, but cautious about U/S Edelman's proposal that France join the U.S. and the UK in a counter-insurgency conference to share past experiences and our respective lessons learned. The MOD and MFA expressed keen interest, however, in U/S Edelman's offer to brief France on U.S. plans for a missile defense site in Europe, including the sharing of threat assessments. The MOD confirmed French and European interest in the potential military uses for the Galileo satellite network. U/S Edelman strongly warned GOF officials against violating their agreement not to overlay the GPS signal. Not only would it pose security problems, but there was the danger of technology transfer to China with the militarization of Galileo. There was agreement on further discussions on Galileo. France conveyed its intention to avoid a trainwreck on Turkey's EU candidacy at the EU's 14 December Council meeting. End Summary.

Afghanistan: French open to suggestions  
-----

13. (C) On December 1, Department of Defense Undersecretary for Policy Eric Edelman met with MFA Political Director Gerard Araud, MFA Strategic Affairs Director Philippe Carre, MOD Strategic Affairs Director Jean de Ponton d'Amecourt, and Elysee Diplomatic Advisor Maurice Gourdault-Montagne. U/S Edelman and his French interlocutors expressed general satisfaction with the outcome of the NATO Riga Summit. The focus of the discussions was on Afghanistan and the steps ahead before the international community. U/S Edelman concurred with an assessment presented at Riga by Defense

Minister Alliot-Marie that the challenge in Afghanistan was greater than had been anticipated, especially with reference to the reconstruction needs. U/S Edelman accordingly stressed that NATO will need to better coordinate reconstruction efforts, as well as ensuring that commanders have the required flexibility on deciding how to use NATO forces on the ground.

¶4. (C) MFA Political Director Araud agreed with U/S Edelman, noting that France had taken on board Washington's message that alliance members needed to do more in Afghanistan. He reviewed the major steps France had agreed recently to undertake in support of ISAF, including keeping French planes in Dushanbe through 2007 for ISAF and OEF missions, and allowing French forces in Kabul to support allies in other Afghan regions on "a case by case basis." French Director for Strategic Affairs Philippe Carre emphasized the "case by case" nature of these potential temporary deployments, but without providing any further clarification on modalities. (Comment: In a subsequent discussion with Carre's deputy, we were told that the GOF had not worked out how the "case by case" decisions would be made, but more than likely these would be handled through French military channels, as opposed to requiring commanders to seek a political decision on potential troop deployments. End comment.)

#### Contact Group for Afghanistan

-----

¶5. (C) Carre stated that France had concluded that ISAF was the only successful institution operating in Afghanistan. Coordination and reconstruction efforts by the UN, G8-coordinator, and the EU, among others, were not satisfactory or up to the standards observed in Kosovo, he added. It therefore is important for "shareholders" to drive the reconstruction process, hence the French proposal for a "Contact group." The intent behind the creation of a contact group was not to manage technical assistance, but to provide political and intellectual guidance for reconstruction efforts, he concluded. Araud volunteered that France would share its ideas with the United States and the UK, and also welcomed our suggestions for the contact group. He added that it was important to develop a pragmatic process of coordination for reconstruction efforts; that it was important that the UN maintain a highly visible profile, and at the same time, that the international community provide the moral and political authority to persuade NGOs, warlords and others to work together in Afghanistan. U/S Edelman replied that the U.S. did not favor one particular institution or another to do reconstruction, just as long as the economic reconstruction efforts were coordinated with the military.

¶6. (C) Ponton d'Amecourt, expanding on the contact group idea, said the aim was to demonstrate that the international community had a political strategy for Afghanistan and that it was not just "about bombs and destruction." Ponton d'Amecourt also highlighted the new French initiatives for Afghanistan, including the addition of 50 military personnel to train the Afghan army. He was particularly pleased that France was able to do more as he had been made aware in meetings with his Canadian counterparts how much the Canadians had felt betrayed at the lack of allied support for its troops in southern Afghanistan.

¶7. (C) Elysee advisor Gourdault-Montagne reiterated his colleagues assessments that the international community needed to be more engaged on the reconstruction of Afghanistan. Referring to France's proposal for a contact group, Gourdault-Montagne suggested the inclusion of regional partners, such as Pakistan and Tajikistan. The inclusion of Iran, however, remained "questionable," but also wondered whether the international community could ignore Iran. U/S Edelman pushed back by highlighting Iran's dubious role, which could include assisting the Taliban. It was important that the international community not reward such "bad behavior," although it might be possible to include Iran in

discussions on countering Afghanistan's drug production problem. Iran might assist in border monitoring efforts, U/S Edelman suggested. Further, with respect to the formation of a contact group, it was essential that the contact group not be viewed as "running Afghanistan," he stated.

#### GOF Cautious on counter-insurgency conference idea

-----

¶8. (C) U/S Edelman explained that with the expansion of ISAF to other regions, the U.S. envisions OEF more focused on high-level counter-terrorism operations. In support of these allied efforts, U/S Edelman proposed to Araud and Ponton d'Amecourt proposed a counter-insurgency conference with French, British and U.S. participants to draw on their respective and painful counter-insurgency experiences in Algeria, Vietnam, Malaysia and in other areas. Towards that end, U/S Edelman also shared with the French a compilation of articles edited by General Petraeus on the lessons learned from various counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency operations.

¶9. (C) Araud, although receptive to the idea of a conference, cautioned that the conference could not be a public event, as the "memories of Algeria still were very sensitive in France." Ponton d'Amecourt shared this view, observing that Algeria remained a delicate topic because of the role the French armed forces played, and which had almost resulted in a coup attempt. Relations with Algeria remain difficult, he added, hence it was important that the conference be properly packaged. (Comment: On the margins of Araud's meeting, his special assistant informed us that in the minds of many in the French public, the military role in Algeria is closely identified with the practice of torture. He suggested that for France it might be useful if the conference had a broader mandate than counter-insurgency. End comment.) U/S Edelman, seeking to address French concerns, suggested that the conference could be held at the NATO college in Rome or at Oberammergau and that it include commanders, colonels, and maybe some civilians. All agreed

to follow up discussions on the concept of a conference.

#### Missile Defense; looking for a third site

-----

¶10. (S) U/S Edelman confirmed to Araud and Ponton d'Amecourt that the U.S. was considering a third missile defense site, but in Europe. In response to Ponton d'Amecourt's query, U/S Edelman stated no final decision had been made, but that talks were ongoing with the Czech Republic and Poland. In order to allay Russian concerns, U/S Edelman had briefed the Russians in Moscow, as well as the NATO-Russia Council, on U.S. intentions and capabilities, noting that U.S. interceptors could not realistically be aimed against Russian ICBMs. "We think the Russians understood our message," U/S Edelman observed. Araud responded that the Russians had conveyed their political concerns to France. Russia is interested in venting its resentment of having interceptors based in former Warsaw Pact territory, he added. Carre stated that the Russians had expressed greater concern over the interceptors than with the accompanying radars.

¶11. (S) U/S Edelman offered to brief his French interlocutors on the U.S. program and the threats posed by Iran, especially to Europe. Ponton d'Amecourt and Araud welcomed the opportunity for such a briefing. U/S Edelman's office promised to follow up with suggested dates for a briefing. Araud suggested that Iran's international posturing was due to the Iranian perception that it had gained in strength from the problems the U.S. was experiencing in Iraq. Iraq may seek to trade on its influence in Iraq to make gains on its nuclear program, while Syria may ask for favors in Lebanon, he opined.

Galileo

-----

¶12. (C) In response to U/S Edelman's query about reported French interest in using Galileo for military purposes, Araud agreed to look into the issue, as he had no immediate information on French planning. Ponton d'Amecourt said many EU members were interested in the potential military uses of Galileo, hence the French decision to raise it at a technical level at NATO. France and others are keen on having a secure European signal for such activities as police operations, and fire fighting and sea rescue operations. It is an encryption issue for the police and the military services, Ponton d'Amecourt added, explaining further why France had presented it at NATO as a means to provide extra security. U/S Edelman strongly conveyed U.S. concerns that the Europeans adhere to their agreement to maintain the separation of GPS and Galileo. There is a danger of overlay onto the GPS signal, he stressed. There is also a danger of transfer of technology to China. Ponton d'Amecourt agreed about the danger with China and ventured that this concern would be factored into the discussions. (Comment: Ponton d'Amecourt explained that questions on Galileo policy were the responsibility of the Prime Minister's office, which may explain why the MFA did not have the lead. End comment.) U/S Edelman and Ponton d'Amecourt agreed that the Embassy would follow up on U.S. concerns.

#### Other Issues -- Turkey

¶13. (C) Araud volunteered that in an effort to avoid a train wreck, France would seek to find a way forward on Turkey's EU candidacy at the 14 December EU Council meeting. It was essential not to close the door on Turkey, he stated. France believes that Turkish PM Erdogan had been surprised by the adverse conclusions in the Commission's recent report on Turkey, and hopes that Erdogan will take stronger action to reinforce Turkey's candidacy. Araud observed that French President Chirac had two main issues of concern: EU membership is seen as "a machine to provide European norms" to applicant countries, it was therefore unfortunate that Turkey was not subscribing fully by the accession criteria. His second concern was to maintain GOT support for Turkey in the face of an unfavorable French public opinion towards Turkey's EU candidacy.

¶14. (U) This message was approved by U/S Edelman.

Please visit Paris' Classified Website at:  
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/paris/index.cfm>  
STAPLETON